

4th Quarter Economy

10/4/2021

NEW YORK'S CASHLESS TOLLING SYSTEM WAS SUPPOSED TO SAVE DRIVERS MONEY, BUT IT MAY DO EXACTLY THE OPPOSITE. THAT'S ACCORDING TO SENATOR JOE GRIFFO. THE STATE HAS SPENT MILLIONS OF DOLLARS INSTALLING THE SYSTEM AT EVERY THRUWAY EXIT, HOPING TO SAVE MONEY BY REPLACING HUMAN TOLL COLLECTORS. BUT THE SYSTEM WILL CHARGE ANYONE WITHOUT AN E-Z PASS TRANSMITTER ADDITIONAL FEES. THAT'S LIKELY TO HIKE TOLLS FOR DRIVERS WHO ONLY USE THE THRUWAY A FEW TIMES A YEAR.

10/5/2021

NEW YORKERS REALLY HATE PAYING THE STATE'S CIGARETTE TAX. IN THE YEARS SINCE THE STATE IMPOSED A \$4.35 TAX ON EVERY PACK OF SMOKES THE NUMBER SOLD HAS PLUNGED BY OVER FIFTY PERCENT. BUT IN THE SAME TIME FRAME SMOKING HAS ONLY DECLINED TWENTY PERCENT. EXPERTS SAY THE DIFFERENCE IS BEING MADE UP WITH UNTAXED CIGARETTES SOLD THROUGH INDIAN TRIBES AND BLACK MARKET TOBACCO SMUGGLED INTO THE STATE. IN ALL THAT'S COSTING NEW YORK OVER 1.3 BILLION DOLLARS A YEAR IN LOST TAX REVENUE.

10/50/2021

ONEIDA COUNTY EXECUTIVE ANTHONY PICENTE WILL ROLL OUT HIS PROPOSED BUDGET LATER THIS MORNING. HE'LL LAY OUT HIS SPENDING PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT YEAR, AND HOW OFFICIALS PLAN TO DEAL WITH SOME SERIOUS FINANCIAL CHALLENGES. THAT INCLUDES PAYING FOR THE WYNN HOSPITAL'S PARKING GARAGE IN DOWNTOWN UTICA, AND THE EXPENDITURE OF MILLIONS IN EMERGENCY PANDEMIC AID. THE ANNUAL ADDRESS TAKES PLACE THIS MORNING AT TEN INSIDE THE LEGISLATURE'S CHAMBER AT THE COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING.

10/11/2021

YOU COULD BE IN FOR SOME STICKER SHOCK WHEN YOU GO TO GAS UP YOUR CAR. LOCAL GAS PRICES ARE RISING AT THE FASTEST RATE IN YEARS. THE LATEST FIGURES FROM TRIPLE A SHOW THE COST OF REGULAR UNLEADED GASOLINE IN THE UTICA ROME AREA HAVE JUMPED TO 3-36 A GALLON. THAT'S AN INCREASE OF SEVEN CENTS A GALLON IN THE LAST WEEK, AND OVER TEN CENTS MORE THAN WE WERE PAYING JUST A MONTH AGO. THE JUMP COMES AS CRUDE OIL PRICES CLIMB IN RESPONSE TO THE END OF THE CORONAVIRUS EPIDEMIC. A YEAR AGO WE WERE PAYING JUST 2-31 A GALLON.

HEATING YOUR HOME THIS WINTER COULD BE A VERY EXPENSIVE PROPOSITION. NATIONAL GRID SAYS THEY EXPECT NATURAL GAS PRICES TO SPIKE BY OVER THIRTY PERCENT THIS SEASON. THAT WOULD COST THE AVERAGE CONSUMER AN EXTRA 155 DOLLARS. THE INCREASE IS IN RESPONSE TO RISING PRICES AROUND THE GLOBE, TRIGGERED BY HIGH DEMAND IN EUROPE. NATURAL GAS PRICES HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY FLAT OVER THE PAST TEN YEARS, BUT FRIGID TEMPERATURES COULD POTENTIALLY DRIVE PRICES EVEN HIGHER.

10/13/2021

WINTER IS COMING, AND NEW YORK IS LOOKING FOR HELP IN THE FIGHT AGAINST SNOW AND ICE. THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NEEDS TO HIRE CLOSE TO FIVE HUNDRED TEMPORARY AND PERMANENT WORKERS TO MAN THE MASSIVE SNOW PLOWS USED TO KEEP ROADS CLEAR. LOCALLY, AT OVER 40 POSITIONS NEED TO BE FILLED. OFFICIALS ARE LOOKING FOR DRIVERS WITH CLASS A OR B COMMERCIAL LICENSES WHO CAN GET CERTIFIED TO DRIVE DOT'S HEAVY TRUCKS WITHIN TWO WEEKS OF BEING HIRED.

10/14/2021

GAS PRICES IN THE UTICA ROME AREA ARE GOING THROUGH THE ROOF. THE LATEST FIGURES FROM TRIPLE A SHOW THE AVERAGE PRICE OF A GALLON OF REGULAR GASOLINE HAS JUMPED UP TO 3-40 A GALLON. THAT'S A NINE CENT JUMP FROM JUST A WEEK AGO, AND A TWO CENT INCREASE IN AS MANY DAYS. WE'RE NOW PAYING MORE THAN THE NEW YORK STATE AVERAGE OF 3-38 A GALLON. AS THE PRICE OF GASOLINE RISES THAT PRICE DISPARITY COULD CONTINUE TO INCREASE AS A RESULT OF THE STATE'S ZONE PRICING SYSTEM.

10/22/2021

EMPLOYERS WILL SOON BE BANNED FOR TESTING WORKERS FOR MARIJUANA USE IN NEW YORK. THAT'S ACCORDING TO NEW REGULATIONS FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR. THE ONLY EMPLOYEES THAT CAN BE REGULARLY TESTED FOR CANNABIS ARE THOSE COVERED BY FEDERAL LAW, INCLUDING COMMERCIAL TRUCK AND BUS DRIVERS. BUSINESSES WOULD STILL BE ALLOWED TO TEST AND FIRE EMPLOYEES WHO SHOW UP FOR WORK UNDER THE INFLUENCE OR IN POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA.

10/26/2021

THE PRICE OF WATER IS GOING UP. THE MOHAWK VALLEY WATER AUTHORITY HAS APPROVED A TWO POINT FIVE PERCENT RATE INCREASE EFFECTIVE JANUARY FIRST. THAT EQUATES TO JUST UNDER TEN DOLLARS FOR THE AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD IN THE AUTHORITY'S COVERAGE AREA. OFFICIALS SAY THE INCREASE IS NEEDED TO COVER CONTINUING CAPITOL EXPENSES AND THE COSTS OF SERVICING INCREASINGLY DECREPIT WATER PIPES. ALMOST HALF OF

THE WATER THE SYSTEM PRODUCES ACTUALLY ENDS UP LEAKING INTO THE GROUND.

12/2/2021

UTICA'S ROADS ARE IN BAD SHAPE, AND THAT'S COSTING YOU MONEY. THAT'S ACCORDING TO A NEW REPORT FROM TRIP, A NON-PROFIT GROUP RESEARCHING TRANSPORTATION ISSUES. IT FOUND 12 PERCENT OF THE AREA'S ROADS AND BRIDGES ARE IN POOR CONDITION, AND ANOTHER 28 PERCENT ARE IN MEDIOCRE CONDITION. THE GROUP ESTIMATES THAT'S COSTING THE AVERAGE DRIVER JUST OVER 12-HUNDRED DOLLARS A YEAR IN HIGHER VEHICLE OPERATING COSTS FOR REPAIRS, INSURANCE COSTS FOR CAR CRASHES, AND CONGESTION RELATED DELAYS.

12/16/2021

SOME OF THE AREA'S MOST DANGEROUS BRIDGES WILL BE GETTING REPAIRED OR REPLACED. YESTERDAY STATE OFFICIALS ANNOUNCED THE AREA WOULD BE RECEIVING OVER THIRTY MILLION DOLLARS IN BRIDGE N-Y FUNDS. THE MONEY COMES FROM A STATE PROGRAM AIMED AT REBUILDING CRUMBLING INFRASTRUCTURE. ONEIDA COUNTY WILL BE GETTING THE LION'S SHARE OF THE MONEY, WITH OVER EIGHT MILLION DOLLARS FUNDING FOUR DIFFERENT PROJECTS, INCLUDING REPAIRS TO THE SOUTH JAMES STREET BRIDGE IN ROME

12/22/2021

PEOPLE ARE FLEEING NEW YORK AT A RECORD PACE. THAT'S ACCORDING TO NEW CENSUS FIGURES. JUST UNDER 320-THOUSAND PEOPLE MOVED OUT OF THE EMPIRE STATE BETWEEN JULY OF LAST YEAR AND THIS YEAR. THAT'S ROUGHLY 1-POINT-6 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION, THE SINGLE LARGEST DECLINE IN HISTORY. EXPERTS SAY THE POPULATION LOSS IS A RESULT OF THE COVID-19 EPIDEMIC, FUELED BY PEOPLE WHO LEFT URBAN AREAS AT THE HEIGHT OF THE OUTBREAK. THE QUESTION NOW IS IF THEY'LL RETURN.